

Sanitized - Approved For Release : CIA-

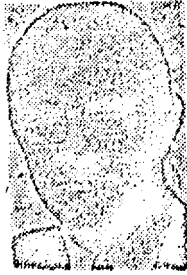
State of Affairs By Clayton Fritchey

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[[Sweet Nothings on CIA

Undersecretary of State Nicholas Katzenbach has lost little time in confirming the doubts about the objectivity of the special three-man committee appointed by President Johnson to investigate the secret subsidies of the Central Intelligence Agency.

Besides Katzenbach, the special probers are John Gardner, secretary of health, education and welfare, and Richard Helms, the director of the CIA. To Sen. J. William Fulbright (D-Ark.), chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, the inclusion of Helms was comparable to asking Treasury Secretary Henry Fowler "to audit the funds of the Federal Treasury. In any case, before the committee has hardly had time to draw a deep breath, its spokesman, Katzenbach, has rushed in with a "preliminary report" which turns out to be simply a gratuitous testimonial to the CIA.



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"The CIA," Katzenbach informs the President, "has been, and continues to be, indispensable to the security of this nation." But no one, certainly not the President, has ever questioned its indispensability.

The Katzenbach apologia appears to be irrelevant to the mission given the special committee. The President directed "a careful review of any government activities that may endanger the integrity and independence" of the educational community. Johnson also called on the committee to "formulate" a policy for future government guidance in this area. So Katzenbach reports back that "it is vitally important that the current controversy over its (CIA) support of certain private organizations not be permitted to obscure the value, or impede the effectiveness, of competent and dedicated career officials serving this country."

Quite so. The thought will no doubt be appreciated by many, especially Helms, but how about getting on with the inquiry? As to the specific charges, Katzenbach already absolves the CIA of acting on its own initiative. It was just carrying out "national policies" which have

"been in effect under four Presidents," including Johnson. This is also the line being taken by Sen. Robert F. Kennedy (D-N.Y.), who says: "If the policy was wrong, it was not the product of the CIA but of each administration." Mr. Kennedy's desire to be fair is understandable, but the efforts to picture the CIA as blameless and just an innocent instrument of national policy will hardly bear scrutiny.

When he created the panel of probers President Johnson gave every appearance of being disturbed; Vice President Humphrey frankly says he is "not at all happy" over the secret subsidies; even Secretary Gardner, one of the three probers, says: "It was a mistake for the CIA to entangle itself in covert activities close to the field of education." The acting attorney general, Ramsey Clark, also questions the propriety of the CIA's actions, as has the majority leader of the senate, Mike Mansfield (D-Mont.).

So, then, who was imposing this policy of systematic subversion of countless organizations and institutions on the supposedly guileless and put-upon CIA? The answer, of course, is that the CIA was, as usual, doing what it wanted to do and planned to do. The CIA theoretically does not make policy, but in practice, as several Presidents can testify to their dismay, it continuously influences and shapes policy to such a degree that it often ends up making it.

U-2 Was Ike's Bay of Pigs

Eisenhower's friends say he still looks back on the U-2 incident as the costliest error of his regime, for it ruined his carefully-nursed detente with Khrushchev. John F. Kennedy always thought the Bay of Pigs invasion was the worst mistake of his administration. These adventures were not presidential, but CIA brain children. As we now know, Kennedy had the gravest misgivings about going ahead with the Cuban invasion, but in the end the CIA prevailed. There could hardly be a more dramatic example of CIA policy making on a cataclysmic scale.

Presidents can, and no doubt sometimes do, overrule the CIA, but when the Agency is hell-bent on some thrilling new offensive in the cold war (which is still very cold to the CIA) it is not easy for even the coolest chief executive to say "No"—and make it stick.

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